

New York's Religions.

Any Number of Fads in the Metropolis.

(New York World.)
By Herbert N. Casson.
Author of "The Crime of Credulity," published by Peter Eckler, No. 3 Fulton street, New York.
If "New York is filled with sects," as an eminent minister recently declared, it is not for lack of religion.
The critical may take their choice from among several score of different forms of worship. And if any very particular person can find none to suit him he may do as a large number of others are doing, start a new religion of his own.
It is said that in Boston a "Religion of Humanity" is started every week, and yet the demand is not satisfied. New York cannot hope to beat this record. Its enthusiasms are of a more practical and commercial nature. Yet religion-building is carried on in New York to a far greater extent than most of its inhabitants realize.
Foremost among these new faiths in point of numbers come the devout followers of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy—the Christian Scientists.
Last month they opened their eighth church in New York City. Throughout the country they claim a membership of more than 1,000,000 believers. The Christian Scientist declares that a good Creator could not make an imperfect universe, and therefore sickness, poverty and even death are but habitual illusions of the human mind.
"Everything is mind," Mrs. Eddy teaches in her book, "Science and Health, With Key to the Scriptures." The streets, fields and buildings, everything that we see around us, and even our own bodies, are nothing but "the stuff that dreams are made of."
Death is but a foolish habit and old age is an unnecessary inconvenience. Everlasting health is the heritage of all human creatures. Such is the optimistic creed of the Christian Scientist.
Not less wonderful has been the growth of Mental Science. It is often confounded with Christian Science, but the two are widely separated in many respects.
The Mental Scientist is not, strictly speaking, a Christian. He believes in "Infinite Mind" rather than God.
Neither does he deny the reality of the material world. Matter exists, he declares, but it is inferior to mind and can be governed in all things by thought.
The Mental Scientist cherishes a hope that street cars will some day be propelled by the thought of the motorman and not by cable or electricity.
He claims to have the power of healing the sick by a sort of wireless telegraphy of thought. Mrs. Helen Williams, the founder of Mental Science, resides in Florida, yet she professes to heal the sick in all parts of the world by merely concentrating her mind upon their troubles.
There are upward of 200 magazines and weeklies published by the Mental Scientists, and they include in their ranks such notable men as Rev. Heber Newton, Henry Wood, B. O. Flower and Ralph Waldo Trine.
It is estimated that there are at least 6,000 Mental Scientists in New York City. They own a large publishing plant on Thirty-first street.
Theosophy had its boom six or seven years ago. Like Christian Science, it was founded by a woman—Mrs. Blavatsky of London.
The extraordinary prophecies was a mystery even to her friends. She was an enormously fat woman, with magnetic hands and big owl-like eyes. About five years ago she died, or, as her followers say, "passed over," and her sceptre is claimed by both Mrs. An-rewant and Mrs. Katherine A. Tingley, each of whom calls the other an impostor.
Mrs. Blavatsky asserted that every individual is permitted to come back to the earth after he dies and inhabit another body. People come back again and again, it is claimed, until their experience in the world is completed.
The one who is poor in his present life will be rich in his next "incarnation," and the one who is rich will be poor. This is called the doctrine of "Karma." Theosophists also believe in a race of wise spiritual beings called "Mahatmas." They teach that human beings when they have lived on earth again and again for many thousands of years will ripen into Mahatmas and become pure spirits.
There are about 3,000 Theosophists in America, and reading rooms are still maintained in New York, Chicago and Boston.
Mrs. Tingley has transferred her headquarters to Point Loma, Cal., where she has undertaken to combine a business with her spiritual labors. A year ago she founded a "School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity," and recently she has organized a "Silk Farm corporation" for the purpose of introducing the silk worm from China.
Mr. Neresheimer, the leader of the new religions, has invested money in the Point Loma silk farm, and several thousand mulberry trees have already been planted to provide food for the delicate little caterpillars from China.
Perhaps the most turbulent of the new religions is that founded by John Alex. Der Dowie in Chicago. The members of this sect—the Zionists—get into trouble with their neighbors with the patient regularity of Peck's Bad Boy.
Dowie, who in appearance and manner resembles a bad-tempered Santa Claus, wins converts by healing the sick and by assailing established churches.
He holds forth to a congregation of 2,000 Chicagoans every Sunday, and during the week races up and down the country on missionary tours.
It is exactly seventy years since the Fox sisters attracted attention by the mysterious table rappings in their home.
Today there are hundreds of Spiritualist mediums and several scores of publications devoted to their interests. There is not a city in America where their seances are not held, and in Europe they include a few men of international reputation, such as Camille Flammarion and Alfred Russel Wallace.
The Spiritualist does not lay much emphasis on forms of belief. He is concerned with one thing only—the evidences of a future life.
He believes that those whom we call dead are hovering around us, invisible but still concerned in our welfare.
For fifty years a little church has been standing at No. 103 First street, New York City. The unique sect that uses it as a place of worship is called the "Christian Israelites."
The creed which this little band of devotees clings to is half Christian and half Jewish, but they have added some peculiar features of their own.
They regard the barber shop as even more iniquitous than the pool room. The member who indulges in the luxury of a hair cut or a shave is promptly expelled.
The "Christian Israelites" are bound

together by the hope of a speedy millennium. This golden age is supposed to be due in 1917.
Everything on earth is to be put straight by a legion of angels, and then the earth is to be ruled for 1,000 years by a congress of 144,000 "immortals." All true believers now living will be permitted to retain their bodies through all eternity, if they survive until the millennium arrives.

This sect is to be found in twenty states of the Union.
One of the oddest of the new religions is the Persian Babism, which numbers 400 believers in New York, 500 in Kenosha, Wis., and 1,000 in Chicago.
The headquarters of this faith is the eastern city of Acre, which became famous during the crusades. The founder of the Babists was a young Persian named Mirza Ali Mohammad, who was shot by the soldiers of the shah in 1850.
In the Persian language the word "Bab" means "the gate," or "the way." Mohammad proclaimed himself to be the "Bab," and his followers increased until today they number a million in Persia and Asia Minor.
The present leader of the Babists is named Abbas Effendi. He has a council of eighteen disciples, who are called "Letters." Nineteen is regarded by the Babists as a sacred number. They divide the year into nineteen months of nineteen days each. Their Bible is a book written by the "Bab" and called the "Bayan."
The Babists believe in equality and simplicity of life. They prohibit begging, celibacy and intemperance.
It was at the Chicago world's congress of religions that Babism was first introduced into New York. A Persian named Ibrahim Kheirallah delivered a course of fifteen lectures, and in this way obtained a nucleus of converts.

Similar to Babism is the new religion which is being preached by the Buddhist monks in New York. A Swami, an Indian name, preaches every Sunday in a hall on Fifty-ninth street to about 300 Buddhists.
The Swamis are a class of philosophical Buddhists who have developed a form of pantheism which attracts those who are inclined to mysticism and occult speculations.

Perhaps the very latest of the new religions is that which is being preached by ex-Professor George D. Herron. In spite of the recent exposures of the divorce court, Dr. Herron has a following of at least 2,500 in New York City and of over 6,000 in Chicago.
The Herronites are a class of people who have idealized social reform into a religion. They are all thorough-going socialists and believe in public ownership of everything in sight.
They believe that the servant should move in the same social circles as her employer; that Mr. Rockefeller, for instance, and his table boy should walk arm in arm to the Union club and sit in the same pew at church; that it is half a crime to be rich and half a virtue to be poor. It is one of their sayings that "None but earners are honest."
Among the smaller religions which have scarcely secured a foothold as yet are "Solar Biology," which says that all human actions are regulated by the movements of the planets; the "Church of the Silent Desire," founded by Prentice Mulford, whose members believe that everything they patiently wish for they will obtain; "Substantialism," originated by Dr. Hall, who maintained that the soul has the same form and shape as the body; and "Zoroastrianism," which proclaims an eternal universe.

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Turned to beauty fair and frail, got his senses back again;
Doubled taxes, cosseted all; cleared away each new built thorn;
Turned the Two-lakh Hospital into a superb zenana;
Heaped up the Bukhsh Sahib wealth and honors manifold;
Clad himself in eastern garb; squeezed his people as of old.
The news from the nabob's domains

Some Queer Travelers.

(New York Times.)

In knocking about the world one meets with many queer travelers, traveling for many queer reasons. The story of a passenger on a Mediterranean steamer with an aged German woman—a princess of one of the petty German "mediated" houses, who lived entirely on passenger ships. She was a tall, angular woman, and looked the very picture in dress, manner and physique of a New England old maid from the rural districts. Although she kept primly to herself, she was a kind old body, and used to like to watch the younger people at their pastimes and flirtations. The story was that the relatives of the angular princess—she happened to be the only member of the family who had any money—had tried to put her in an insane asylum, and the old lady, in disgust, had shaken the dust of the fatherland from her garments and vowed that hereafter she would spend her time entirely among strangers. So she went aboard ship at Hamburg and began to travel, changing from ship to ship as the different ports and keeping far beyond the reach of designing relatives. That was eight years ago. It was interesting to know if the princess is traveling still, or, if she died, where and how.

Few people have a stranger reason for traveling than Edward Welsh, who trots around the world with a big black bear, in the life of which is supposed to be contained the life of Welsh's employer, an Indian nabob. In 1888 Welsh, who two years before had become financial adviser to a native ruler in India, was in a way of becoming the real ruler of his master's dominions and all the court was furious with jealousy. So they put up a job on Edward. The nabob of Nawab was induced to consult a native priest, or mullah, as to how long he would live. The mullah declared that the nabob would live as long as a certain black bear which was then in the palace menagerie, and when the bear died the nabob would die. A veterinary surgeon from Bombay was sent for, and he decided that in order to prolong the bear's life he should be kept in a temperature varying between 50 and 60 degrees Fahrenheit. The nabob was frightened, and decided that the bear with whose life his own was so curiously bound should at all hazards be kept in the required temperature. Then the thing happened which delighted the hearts of the courtiers. Above all men the nabob trusted Edward Welsh, and to him he committed his life in the guise of the big black bear. He was told to spare no expense. Unlimited money was at his disposal, but he must travel about with the bear and keep it always in a temperature between 50 and 60 degrees. So Welsh found himself exiled from court, with a black bear on his hands, and now travels about dodging extremes of climate, while the old native advisers of the nabob have things their own way. The native state, the administration of which Welsh had begun to reform, has dropped back again to its former condition; and as for the nabob, secure in his confidence in Edward Welsh, he has disavowed the city jail, stopped at once the city drain.

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makes Edward Welsh shudder, and it is with a sad heart that he learns how his royal master "drinketh the simkin and bradly peg, maketh the money to fly." But as his salary is something enormous he travels on with the big black bear and the thread of the nabob's life.

Another extraordinary traveler is John K. Hampton, who made a fortune on the Liverpool corn exchange. In the days when he was struggling for gold he found that nothing gave him such an unadulterated pleasure as a dish of strawberries and cream. If he ever got rich, he said, he would have strawberries and cream every day. He would have fresh ones in their season, too, not any hothouse affairs. Finally fortune smiled on him, probably just by way of experiment, to see if he would keep his strawberry vow, for fortune is fond of his little jokes. Nine years ago Hampton found himself so wealthy that he worked any more would have been a labor of supererogation and, true to his vow, he started out chasing strawberries. It was in September when he finally knocked off work for good, and he immediately bought a through ticket for Cairo, where fresh strawberries can be had in that month. Since then he has regularly followed the late spring, and the strawberries, from Cairo to Algiers, from Algiers up through Spain and, passing north, up through France, when the strawberry season is finished in that country he crosses over to the Channel islands and thence to Cornwall, where he lands in England in the middle of June. His northward movement ends in Scotland late in August, and when the last Scottish strawberries are sold he buys a through ticket back to Cairo to begin his tour over again.

Frederick Macdonald, formerly of Edinburgh, comes about the world in order that he may keep in a perpetual summer. Even a tropical rainy season he will not endure. He must have genuine midsummer, and will see neither spring nor autumn.

In the registers of the best hotels all over the world you will find the name "Frederick Macdonald, late of Edinburgh." But always it is written in the height of the summer season, and if you ask when the gentleman left the clerk will tell you a date which was before the first rose and yellow leaf announced the coming of the fall. The reason of Mr. Macdonald's travels is this. In 1887 he was a happy man of fortune with a wife and three children—two sons and a daughter. His wife caught a chill while out in an autumnal Scottish mist, had pneumonia and died. His elder son walked into the Thames river, near Wapping, in a London October fog, and his second son was drowned on a ship which went ashore in a November fog in the British channel. His daughter, while at school in Germany, caught a cold, which developed into pneumonia, while returning from a dance at the house of a schoolmate one October evening. In 1889 the stricken man found himself a childless widower, and since that time he has chased the midsummer about the world.

Professor von Schendel of Berlin is the author of a book entitled "How to Live for Centuries." He believes that it is the sudden changes in temperature which kill people, and that if a man lived in perpetual spring he could live an indefinite time. The variations of the season from hot to cold, and cold to hot, he argues, cause the blood to vary its speed and so throws the whole working of the system out of order, straining it considerably with every

change. The professor is a little too old, he thinks, to make a personal test of his theory, but he is trying it vicariously with his son. He has his son traveling about the world chasing the springtime and enjoying life. With the young man are two physicians, who make daily reports on the state of the traveler's health. The fact that never once has his son been afflicted with any ailment makes the professor happy.

Another chaser of the merry spring is Frank R. Smythe, well known in the London clubs as a "dinner specialist." He follows the spring about the world because he wants fresh, early vegetables. He is a bachelor with a large bank account and one aim in life—to discover new dishes which shall mark a new era in culinary art. He has ransacked the whole world to gain his ends. He never considers that a dinner is complete unless there are four or five fresh vegetables on the table. Therefore he is never found in any foreign country except in the spring, unless some great and important occasion should arise to change his ordinary course of life. Such an occasion recently occurred when the secretary of post haste to Darkest Africa. When Sir Harry Johnstone, the British commissioner in Uganda, reported that he had discovered the heliotherium in the forests of the protectorate, Mr. Smythe was immediately seized with a desire to see what sort of eating the ancient animal would be, and, packing his grip, started at once for the region where the beast makes his lair. The London clubs are awaiting with impatience the official report of the dinner specialist on heliotherium roast, stewed and fried.

A traveler whose coming is blessed by the poor of all countries, is Mrs. Humphrey D. Jones. When Humphrey D. Jones died he left his childless widow \$100,000 a year, and made of her request. He told her in a letter which he left for her how in his youth he had traveled over all of Europe, penniless and seeking work. In summer he could always earn a meal, and the fields and woods were the finest sleeping places in the world. But in winter he had almost starved to death in every country, and many a time had been picked up in the morning nearly frozen to death by the cold of the night. He therefore asked her to spend one year over and above her income of \$100,000 to spend in the manner indicated. Mrs. Jones is carrying out her husband's plan, and has spent winters in East London, Paris, Berlin and Moscow. Next winter she goes to Norway and Sweden on her charitable mission.

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